

Dear Chairman Powell and Commissioners,
As a citizen who wants to be informed about the political and electoral issues that affect my life, I am greatly disappointed by the lack of informative television programming.

Local public affairs programming is virtually non-existent--constituting less than one half of 1% of all local programming. More than half of news broadcasts prior to the 2002 elections did not include a single campaign story. Our democracy is at risk when many Americans don't know basic facts about the candidates or the issues, as was the case in the 2000 elections. Just the beating up of each other is all we get.

Since broadcasters have clearly failed in their obligation to serve the public interest, the FCC should define meaningful public interest requirements that include local civic and electoral affairs programming. At a minimum, broadcasters should air three hours per week of local civic and electoral affairs programming, with at least two hours devoted to substantive election coverage in the six weeks prior to Election Day.

As the elections approach, a well-functioning democracy demands that citizens have access to a diversity of opinions and voices on the choices confronting us.

I am not alone in getting fed up with both candidates spending time putting each other down and bragging about what they will do when (not if?) elected, but never really saying exactly what that might be. "I have a plan" doesn't tell us what the plan is And "I am GOING to do" doesn't explain why some of these things haven't been implemented in the four years of being in a position to do it.

Esther Knott
1601 Pontiac Ct.
Orlando, FL 328087143